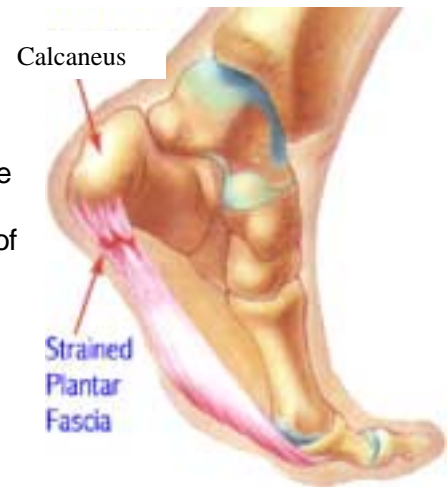




**United States Military Academy**  
**Sports Medicine-Physical Therapy Services**  
**Keller Army Community Hospital and Arvin Gym, West Point, New York**  
*"Academic, Research, and Clinical Excellence"*

## **Plantar Fasciitis**

The plantar fascia is a fibrous band of tissue that connects the heel bone to the ball of the foot and the toes. It supports the arch of the foot. Like the string of a bow, the tension on the fascia can be very great. Pain in your heel or arch could be a result of too much tension, causing inflammation of the fascia (plantar fasciitis).



### **Symptoms**

Recurring heel pain is the primary symptom. Symptoms are usually increased with the first few steps in the morning and with repeated use of the foot.

### **Causes**

Plantar fasciitis is caused by chronically overstressing the fascia. X-rays of the heel may reveal a bony spur but frequently spurs are not associated with pain and need not be treated. There are several contributing factors:

1. Training errors such as running too many miles on improper surfaces
2. Poor footwear that is not appropriate for your foot type
3. Inflexible calf muscles
4. Biomechanical faults of the feet (flat foot or high arch)

### **Treatment**

1. Relative Rest: If possible, avoid activities that aggravate your symptoms
2. Control Inflammation:
  - a. Medication - non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication may be prescribed.
  - b. Ice Massage - Perform 2-3 times per day. Freeze water in Styrofoam or paper cup, peel away cup and apply directly to the heel. Keep ice cup moving at all times. Apply Ice Massage for 7-10 minutes.
3. Purchase and wear proper shoes
4. Calf-stretching exercises
5. Other physical therapy modalities may be utilized if necessary

- **Based off of the findings of your exam your physical therapist will help you develop a well-balanced treatment plan that meets your specific needs.**

